

First Person Shooter

Everyday Counter-Strike

The term first-person shooter refers to an independent computer game genre whose main characteristic is that it is played in the first-person perspective, with shooting as the main action of the game. The player moves his or her character in a three-dimensional world and perceives the digital environment through the eyes of this virtual character. A typical element within this genre is the virtual arm of the player, which remains in front at all times, and which represents the arm of the player reaching into virtual reality as a digital extension of his or her body. This virtual arm is attached to the character's head movements, which are controlled by computer mouse. No matter where the player looks, the arm holding the weapon stays at the lower right corner pointing toward the centre of the screen. It is, in fact, impossible to lower the arm. In the project First Person Shooter, the arm holding the weapon of the video game Counter-Strike (Valve 1999) is transferred into physical space. The project consists of a postcard that is also a do-it-yourself kit. Players who cut and glue all of the parts of the card together receive a pair of glasses bearing the arm with the weapon. These graphic objects, adapted from the game Counter-Strike, are visible both from within and from outside the glasses. When a player wears the glasses, the arm holding a weapon always remains in the front, regardless of the direction in which the player moves his or her head. Attached to the eyes, the glasses reflect the strongly visual character of the game. The private space between the eyes and the gun is contrasted by public space in which the user of the glasses is identified from the outside as a first-person shooter. The First Person Shooter glasses are, of course, a provocation and a comment on violence in video games. By transferring the typical first-person view to the real world, the player is confronted with his or her actions in the game. At the same time, the project shows how separate everyday life in the physical world is from virtual gaming space, with its own rules. A typical gamer would not confuse these two worlds. The First Person Shooter glasses are an attempt to indicate that violence happens primarily in peoples' minds.

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UBIQUITOUS GAMES www.datenform.de Datenform, Berlin, DE, 2006 Affiliation Everyday Counter-Strike